

7-22-46

SAINT PATRICK ACADEMY
MOMENCE, ILLINOIS

J. M. J.

Feast of Mary Magdalen, 1946.

Rev. Father Aloysius Ellacuria, C.M.F.,
Claretian Major Seminary,
Compton, California.

Rev. dear Father:

This letter will be difficult to write - as difficult as the decision to finally do so has been. Were I able to talk to you, I would not hesitate to tell you all - to put it down on paper has been something I could not bring myself to do.

Although God seemed to have drawn me to Himself in a very close and intimate manner during my stay at Wedron and seemed to have brought me to Thabor for several weeks, during the past four months or so, He seems to have withdrawn Himself completely and there has been nothing but the deepest desolation. I have sought and sought in vain to find Him and I have begged for grace to be resigned to this if this is what He wished of me. During the time of consolation, I enjoyed the greatest peace of soul I have ever known and I felt that nothing could ever be difficult with Him so close to me. However, He seemed to have wished to test my loyalty and my love - He tested me and found me wanting. Since then, I have not known what peace of soul is. There have been disgust, discouragement, disappointment, failure and ill success in practically everything. I have tried and tried in vain to find Him.

I was at home during the July retreat. Although I did not make the retreat, I followed many of the conferences. We had a Redemptorist Father, Father Wartman. He told me he thought he had met you. He gave a retreat a few years ago in Beaverville. He based his retreat on the Holy Spirit, basing the conferences on the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit. Frankly, he did not appeal to me at all until he gave a very wonderful conference on confidence. I went to confession to him and I left the confessional in a very upset state of soul. In a way, I regret now not having made the retreat here - the prospect of making it now with him as a retreat master rather frightens me. I realize that God's grace will be with me and will supply for my deficiencies but I have never been in quite the

same state of soul for our annual retreat. I have always felt that no matter what the faults and failings of the year had been, I had always received the grace to make a good annual retreat. I beg your prayers that I may not fail to do so this year.

And now to go back to the cause of all of this. You know that we had our provincial chapter the early part of March for the election of delegates to our General Chapter. You know the results. In my pride and vanity, however, I had frankly expected to be one of those chosen; my disappointment was one of the keenest I have ever had in my life. I cannot explain what I went through, during the chapter and since then. What hurt most keenly was that those whom I had always considered my closest and most intimate friends evidently were not for me. This was particularly the case in regard to Mother Rose Mary. From the results of the votes cast, I knew that she had not voted for me; I realize that that was her privilege and that she had the right to vote for the one she wished - but I felt that we could never again be on the same terms of intimacy and friendship as we had been before. I begged for the grace to accept this disappointment; I thanked God for having sent this to me; I did all I could to hide my feelings from others. The reaction, however, set in - disgust, disappointment, discouragement, desire to give up everything - the thought at times, even of my vocation. I wanted to give up any office I had in the community, particularly that of council member. Everything was distasteful to me; everything jarred on my nerves and all seemed so futile. About a week or so after this happened, I received your letter. You can imagine the effect it had on me. Mother St. Eugene noticed that I was not natural after I received it; I was frankly glad that she perhaps thought my difficulty was something you might have said in your letter. I resented your sending me to Mother St. Eugene; I did not wish to do as you had said. Grace conquered, however, and I did as you had said. In regard to the discipline, Mother permitted me to take it once a week during Lent only; in regard to the candy fast, she advised eating candy but restricting myself as to the amount; I agreed that this was wise but I really have not followed this advice - I seem to crave so much for sweets that I eagerly seek all I can get. Is this gluttony? Is this a lack of mortification?

Things continued to go from bad to worse. I believe you know something of the situation of our high school here in regard to the girls from town. During the past year, we had only about thirteen girls here while at the public high school, there are at least twenty to twenty five Catholic girls. The situation is discouraging. You can imagine how

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I felt when Father Demarais spoke to me one day about the question and said that he felt the parish would be better off without our high school here; that eventually we would be forced to close it and that it would be better if we would close of our own accord. I reported this to Rev. Mother at one of our council meetings. It was a keen blow to her, too, but she regarded it rather lightly and felt that Father must have been out of sorts the day he spoke to me. I brought up the question again at another council meeting but I received such a rebuff from Reverend Mother for doing so, that I resolved never again to make mention of it. It is difficult, however, to submit to this decision, when your own judgement is entirely contrary. I realize that God will bless obedience but it is difficult. I feel that authority can be wrong in its decisions - if I have the charge, I should have something to say in the matter but evidently I haven't. You mentioned something in your letter about my being busy preparing matters for the General Chapter. I felt that I would do nothing; in many things, we meet the same thing as I met in the above situation. Reverend Mother has her own ideas on things and what you say cannot change her. I realize again that God sometimes asks complete submission of our judgement as well as our will - but where are to draw the line? Must we never have any thoughts of our own?

I repeat daily the Litany of Humility- begging God to deliver me from the fear of having others preferred to me, to let others be chosen and ~~I~~ set aside, to let the opinions of others be followed and mine rejected, et.c. but as the year went on, ~~and~~ one failure after another followed. Others were chosen and were preferred to me in so many things - some little, some big; the reaction on my part?? again, keen disappointment, even though I thanked Him for sending these to me. I have been open and frank in confession and have asked for advice. At times, things went better afterwards but again and again, all comes back to me. I go through my spiritual exercises as a matter of duty - but I find no peace or consolation in them. This thought is constantly before me - God tested me and found me wanting; because of this, He has withdrawn Himself completely from me. Your reference to St. Francis De Sales in regard to my duties " To ask for nothing and to refuse nothing" /

have caused me much suffering. I know you are right but I have felt that I could not do as you asked. I wanted to give up everything, particularly any position of trust or confidence which I have in the community; that of supervisor, principal, and council member.

I am deeply humiliated in telling you all of this - yet I have felt that unless I did so, I was not being frank with you. I beg your prayers that I may begin to learn the first lessons of Humility. I trust that I may receive a word from you before retreat. I feel that I cannot make my yearly review to the retreat master. He has bound me to silence in regard to what he told me which has upset me so much; I feel that I cannot now return to him. I fear the retreat now in my present dispositions.

May I ask your prayers also for the grace of a holy and a happy death for my dear mother who has been seriously ill? Mother is now eighty-six years old; she has led a most beautiful and holy Christian life and is ready for death but it is hard to see her go.

Thank you for your prayers for Father Moisant. When I have the opportunity of seeing Father, I shall ask him to pray for you. Father returned from Florida, the week after Easter. He was supposed to come to see me but I have not seen him since his return. He was acting chaplain at Our Mother of Sorrows Institute in Blue Island for a time but just recently he was made pastor of a little parish southwest of Kankakee, by the name of Good rich. It is a small parish and has only about thirty-five families; from what I hear, Father likes it there very much. Camp Star of the Sea has been turned over to Bishop Griffin of Springfield; the Viatorian Fathers no longer have anything to do with it. Reverend Mother had decided that we Sisters would not go to camp this year. I have really enjoyed being at home during the summer.

We had a very lovely day here for the celebration of Mother St. Eugene and Sister Mary Eleanore's silver jubilee. Mother and Sister were both happy to have heard from you. They would have been happy to have had you with them on that day. It was an anniversary for me also as I had taken the holy habit the day Mother and Sister made their vows so it had been twenty-five years since I had taken the habit. When I think of those years spent in such constant conflict, when I realize the miserable state in which I now am, after the oceans of grace - as you said - which have been poured upon my

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soul, I am frightened. I beg your prayers and your help. There is just one thing more; in regard to my duties, Father, I am not physically fit to undertake all-yet there seems to be nothing to be done about it. Am I to take "all and say nothing?"

I received a lovely letter from Michael Cody; he tells me that he is to have the privilege of being with you in the scholasticate. I almost envy him his privilege. I am happy to know that he is getting along nicely and I pray that God may grant him the grace of becoming a very holy and zealous priest. Kindly remember me to him if he is already in the scholasticate.

I almost forgot another thing. When there was question of our Mothers going to France, Reverend Mother asked me to accept the charge of the Academy while Mother was away. She did not ask for an immediate answer but told me to think it over and give her my answer later. I wished to refuse but didn't dare so when I thought of your words: "Ask nothing, refuse nothing." However, shortly after, word came that the General Chapter was to be postponed so I had no answer to give.

May I ask you, Father, to kindly destroy this letter after you have read it? I have opened my soul completely to you - you now see it in all its pride, vanity, and its ugliness. Would that you could now give me absolution so that I would not have to go over all this again. I beg your blessing and your prayers.

Gratefully in Corde Maria

Sister Mary Dolores, S.S.C.M.

Will you be kind enough to take care of the enclosed stipends? Thank you.

J. M. J.

July 23rd 1946

Rev. Dr. George C. M. F.

Rev. Dear Father

Here I am in Portland, Oregon
for a little rest, I am anxious to know
if you received my letter on or about
the last week in June. I then sent you
one they friends one was for Billy Dresser
to tell me if he should be a priest
he is home from the Army at the
University of Portland for the summer session
I heard he has decided to study medicine
this fall I may see him before I leave here
I thought I would give him some
advice. However I will talk to him
about it if I get the chance again
may never have the chance again

drop me off in
a good place
I will come back to you
as soon as possible

on board you
as soon as possible
as soon as possible

his people are all protestants and live here in
Portland, I wonder if You received my letter
let me know, even when I go home what
ever advice You give in the matter I will
write it to him.

Sister Regis and my self are here at the
Joan-De-Erc. home conducted by the Sisters of
mercy, we are enjoying the quiet of it, our
Room is on the same floor as the Chapel, have
Holy mass every morning, we spent the day
Monday, at Our Lady of Sorrows shrine it is a
beautiful place, but more it is a Holy place
He said all our prayers there, I also remembered
You and Your Holy Novices, in all my prayers
I made my retreat in June, that too
was difficult because I felt very poorly
I did my best and asked Our Lord and
His Holy Mother to help me You were often in
my thoughts how I'd like to talk to You,
I thought of You preparing Your Novices for their
Holy Ordination day. You and them had
my prayers, many thanks for the Immaculate
Heart Chant I read it and put it where the
public who come to the Hosp. may read it
I hope dear Father You will excuse my shaky
hand, may I hear from You soon.
Thanking You for all Your prayers and Blessings
for me, tell me some of Your new Holy
intercourse with Our Lord, and His Holy Mother
it will be a help to my poor soul I assure You
God love and bless my Brother in Christ
Devotedly Yours in J. M. J.
Sister Mildreda

prayers.

My wishes for another 25 years in His service, years of love and great favor with which God has so favored you.

Respectfully,

J. M. M.

J. M. J.

Dear Rev. Father;

O. L. A.,
July 25, '46

Please excuse our today greetings but I did not know the date - hence the delay. A small gift is going forward to you - I made it

myself so please do not
examine it too closely.
as it is the will that
counts, and the intention
I know that is what
you will look to. —

J. M. Mediator is to
undergo a gall's operation
at Mercy Hospital in Chicago
tomorrow. Please remember
her in your prayers.

Please recommend
our retreat to God —
Aug 8-15th, and pray
especially for my needy
needy soul.

You will be
remembered in my good

J. M. J.

July 29, 1946.

Dear Father:

Just a note to tell you that
sister M. medieavit was operated on Saturday
instead of Friday.
She was on the operating table
about 2 hours. The operation was
successful but brother was very sick
from the anesthetic. They gave her a
general anesthetic.
Your letter just came and I will

give sister your message. I am
hoping to receive permission to
visit her in a few days.
I will be on my retreat from
the 9th to the 15th of Aug. Do pray
and beseech Almighty God to give
me the grace to make a good
retreat. I may write to you while
in Beaverville. Ask Him to give me
more faith!

I will write again in a few days.
Always gratefully yours in Mary's Holy Heart,
Linentown Eugene

J.M.J.
Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary
Claretian Major Seminary
18127 So. Alameda Blvd.
Compton, California

July 30, 1946.

Dear Mother Mary Dolores,

Your letters and the stipends for Holy Masses were received opportunely. I gave all due attention to the Holy Masses. Very many thanks for your congratulations for the Silver Jubilee of my Holy Profession. These congratulations came a little too early, because my anniversary is on the 15th. of August. So continue to pray for me, particularly up to the 15th. We do not have any external celebration of this event, and it will be completely unknown, the way I want it to be. All I care for is the prayers of good souls, in order that I may not find myself wanting in the day of reckoning in the sight of Him Whom I love with all my heart.

To make the answer to your last letter short, it comes to me that all that has happened to you during the past four months is most Providential. You are now about to make your Retreat. On what will you work during this Retreat, dear Mother Mary Dolores? In striving with all your heart and soul after the third degree of humility. Yes, decidedly so. Our Lord has permitted for your best all that disgust, discouragement, disappointment, failure, and ill-success, practically in all your undertakings, to draw you unto a greater likeness of Himself, Who, having before Him honor and ignominy, took the latter for us and for our sake.

Ask the Holy Spirit, from now till the end of your days, an ever keener knowledge and appreciation of the third degree of

Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary
Claretian Major Seminary
18127 So. Alameda Blvd.
Compton, California

humility. Center your sanctity on this point. Let it be the constant object of your prayers, meditations, examinations, and spiritual readings. It will be a tough struggle, but all of it is to show our greatest possible love for Christ, Who will make your yoke sweet and your burden light.

Please send to me any notes that you can gather from the Retreats that are given in your convents. I am most thankful for your notes in the past.

With my constant prayers and blessings for your soul,

Your spiritual father,

Father Aloysius Ellacuria, C.M.F.

Hail, Heart of Mary
Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary
Claretian Major Seminary
18127 So. Alameda Blvd.
Compton, California

July 31, 1946.

Dear Mother Mary of the Precious Blood,

Very many thanks for all your letters, which I received promptly. Many thanks also for the Mass stipends, which were given immediate care. Your best wishes and prayers for my birthday increased my spiritual consolation, and I have received the congratulations of all the Sisters of your Academy for the Silver Jubilee of my First Holy Profession, together with your most thoughtful gift. This gift will be used for the first time at the Altar of God on the 15th. of August, which is the exact date of the 25th. anniversary of my first vows. So you have not been tardy in greeting me.

You, dear Mother Mary of the Precious Blood, are about to enter into your Retreat. Now, I want you to begin your Retreat as a most valiant woman, full of courage, and with unbounded confidence in your Divine Spouse and in your most Holy Mother, both of Whom you love most ardently, and Who love you still more ardently, and as a token of Their immense love for you have given you as your portion not joy, but sorrow, not a crown of roses, but a crown of thorns, not the glory of Mount Thabor, but the slow daily martyrdom of a living crucifixion on the bed of the Cross. . . . I congratulate you so much the more for it. I want you to believe the Holy Spirit through you director. On what will you center all your attention throughout your Retreat? Without any hesitation, dear Mother Mary of the Precious Blood, your work during your Retreat, and out of it,

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18127 South Alameda

Compton, California

must be centered on sinking as deeply as you can into the bottomless abyss of the third degree of Humility. I comprehend your trials and tribulations fully well. Be of stout heart. You are on God's side. Nay more, you are really crucified together with Christ. "Per Crucem ad Iucem". "Through the Cross unto light".

May the Passion of Christ and the Sorrows of the Blessed Mother strengthen your weariness and soothe your affliction, so that you may continue most faithfully, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to accomplish God's high designs upon your chosen soul.

In union of prayer,

Your spiritual father,

Father Aloysius Illacuria, C.M.F.

Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Claretian Major Seminary

18127 South Alameda

Compton, California

To Whom It May Concern:

This is to certify that Thomas Sullivan, 1277 West 73rd. Place, Chicago, Illinois, was a postulant for the Claretian Fathers at St. Jude's Seminary, Momence, Illinois, from 1939 to 1943, and there completed his High School course. The undersigned was his Superior at St. Jude's Seminary for his first three years, and is very pleased to testify that Thomas Sullivan was always a good student and exemplary in his deportment.

Father Alcysius Ellaeuris, C.M.F.